

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 EUR-12 CAB-02 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00
L-03 /047 W

-----068475 111319Z /75

R 110710Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6146
AMEMBASSY ROME
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

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ROME FOR RCAA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, BEXP, XF

SUBJECT: GULF AIR: MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS DIMINISH BUT NEW
TRISTAR PURCHASE DEFERRED.

1. LOCKHEED OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMED EMBASSY THAT AT GULF AIR BOARD MEETING THIS PAST WEEK DECISION WAS TAKEN TO DEFER FIRM COMMITMENT TO PURCHASE FOUR ADDITIONAL TRISTARS UNTIL NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING. LOCKHEED ADVISED GULF AIR THAT IF DECISION DELAYED UNTIL NOVEMBER IT IS LIKELY THAT LOCKHEED COULD NOT DELIVER THE PLANES WHEN DESIRED BY GULF AIR. GULF AIR PRESENTLY OWNS FOUR TRISTARS AND LEASES TWO FROM TWA. THE FOUR ADDITIONAL WHICH THE AIRLINE PROPOSES PURCHASING WOULD REPLACE THE TWO LEASES IN 1980 AND ADD TWO NEW PLANES TO THE FLEET IN 1981. LOCKHEED WAS DISAPPOINTED IN THE DECISION TO DELAY BUT BELIEVED THAT GULF AIR IS STILL FIRMLY COMMITTED TO

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THE ADDITIONS. WE AGREE.

2. THE PROBLEM OF POOR MAINTENANCE OF THE TRISTARS BY BRITISH AIR AT LONDON PERSISTS BUT IS SLOWLY BEING SOLVED. GULFAIR HAS DEVELOPED SOME RAMPSIDE MAINTENANCE CAPABILITY AT LONDON SO THAT MINOR PROBLEMS CAN BE HANDLED QUICKLY WITHOUT THE NEED TO TOW AIRCRAFT TO THE BA MAINTENANCE HANGER. IN ADDITION, GULF

AIR, WITH EXCELLENT SUPPORT FROM ROLLS ROYCE, OPENED ITS OWN ENGINE FACILITY AT BAHRAIN AIRPORT THIS PAST WEEK. ANY PAST ENGINE PROBLEM INCLUDING MINOR BEARING REPLACEMENT ENTAILED AIR SHIPMENT OF THE ENTIRE ENGINE IN A SEPARATE AIRCRAFT TO LONDON. NOW GULFAIR CAN BREAK THE ENGINE DOWN INTO TIS SMALLER MODULES, REPLACE ONE MODULE AND SHIP THE FAULTY MODULE TO LONDON ON A REGULARLY SCHEDULED AIRCRAFT. LOCKHEED OFFICIALS WERE VERY IMPRESSED BOTH WITH THE SPEED WITH WHICH THIS NEW FACILITY WAS COMPLETED AND WITH THE FACILITY ITSELF.

3. NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE ON THE PROPOSED WIDE-BODY MAINTENANCE FACILITY FOR ABU DHABI AIRPORT. THIS FACILITY WILL BE BUILT AND OWNED BY THE ABU DHABI GOVERNMENT WHICH IS NEGOTIATING DIRECTLY WITH LOCKHEED AND ROLLS ROYCE. GULF AIR IS MERELY SITTING IN AS THE EVENTUAL PRIMARY CUSTOMER. LOCKHEED SECURED A PRELIMINARY DESIGN FROM THE RALPH M. PARSONS ORGANIZATION IN THE U.S. WHICH WAS USED BY THREE UNNAMED FIRMS RECOMMENDED BY ABU DHABI AS A BASIS FOR PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES TO COMPARE WITH THOSE SUBMITTED BY PARSONS. ABU DHABI HAS RESPONDED TO THE COST ESTIMATES AND LOCKHEED IS TO PRESENT SOME CHANGES AND ALTERNATE SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION AND FACILITY MANAGEMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT BY MAY 14. LOCKHEED BELIEVES THAT ACTUAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT START IN ABU DHABI BY THE END OF MAY. IF THE FACILITY IS BUILT, IT WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE VIRTUALLY ALL THE MAINTENANCE FOR GULFAIR AND OTHER TRISTAR OWNERS IN THE REGION IN THE VERY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEAR FUTURE AXZ, AT A LATER DATE, MAINTENANCE OF OTHER WIDE-BODIED AIRCRAFT.
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Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Event:
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